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GER: RE. LISLE
(39) M-717

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

7626.5411/6-2058

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: June 20, 1958

SUBJECT: Delivery of Aide-Memoire on Helicopter in East Germany Case to Soviet Charge d'Affaires

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. Murphy - G 57
Mr. Sergei P. Striganov, Soviet Charge d'Affaires
Mr. Anatoli G. Myshkov, Second Secretary, Soviet Embassy
Mr. Lisle - GER

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Mr. Murphy told Mr. Striganov, who had called at Mr. Murphy's request, that he wished to take up the case of the helicopter which had been forced down near Zwickau in East Germany. Under the terms of agreements made in the early days after the war between Generals Clay and Sokolovsky and between Generals Huebner and Malinin, there are procedures for the return of personnel of one Force held by the other. These agreements have worked well. Within the past year the United States authorities have returned a Soviet soldier and, only three weeks ago, the Soviet authorities returned three United States airmen to American Control. Mr. Murphy said he had been asked to deliver an aide memoire giving the facts of the case and to ask that it be transmitted to the Soviet Government. He noted that, after twelve days, the United States public is becoming very disturbed.

The Soviet representatives read the aide memoire slowly and with evident care.

When they had finished Mr. Murphy said he would be grateful for the transmission of the aide memoire. He urged that sympathetic consideration be given to it as the present situation is a most unhappy one.

Mr. Striganov, speaking in Russian translated by Mr. Myshkov, stated that he would send the aide memoire to Moscow. However, he wished to note that apparently the helicopter and personnel are on the territory of the German Democratic Republic. As far as he could understand, therefore, the helicopter and personnel were at present within the jurisdiction of the authorities of the GDR. Therefore, it would appear that the question of their transfer to the American authorities was in the hands of the appropriate authorities in the GDR.

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Mr. Murphy replied that what was ignored in Mr. Striganov's statement was that there are agreements among the Four Powers who have responsibility for Germany. These agreements have been respected and, in fact, recently invoked. Suddenly the Soviets say that they have no responsibilities. This, Mr. Murphy said, he could not understand.

Mr. Striganov replied that he was not familiar with the facts and therefore could not discuss them.

Mr. Murphy retorted that of course Mr. Striganov was not familiar with the facts and that he had assumed Mr. Striganov would not wish to discuss them until he had heard from his Government. However, Mr. Striganov had raised the substantive features of the case and had commented on them and that is why Mr. Murphy had felt he must reply.

Mr. Striganov stated he must emphasize that the helicopter landed in GDR territory and was now within the competence of the GDR authorities. As to the statements made in the aide memoire, he was not in a position to discuss them.

Mr. Murphy asked whether Mr. Striganov wished to carry on a discussion now. Mr. Striganov replied that he was ready to discuss the question of the GDR. The helicopter was on its territory, within its jurisdiction, and not in the hands of the Soviets. He knew nothing of the alleged agreements referred to in the aide memoire and did not wish to discuss them.

Mr. Murphy replied that he was familiar with the GDR and did not want to discuss it with Mr. Striganov. He did wish to discuss Soviet obligations under their agreements. The Soviet authorities have certain responsibilities and that is why Mr. Striganov had been asked to come in.

Mr. Striganov said he would refer the aide memoire to his Government.

In leaving, Mr. Striganov replied in response to Mr. Murphy's question that the ballet troupe would stay one more week in New York. Mr. Murphy complimented him on the troupe's superb performance.

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